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## Must-Know Words

**Bullying** is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online or via text/apps/games (**cyberbullying**).

**Netiquette/Tech Etiquette** is an unofficial set of guidelines for appropriate use of online tools and courteous communication in the online environment.



## Mental Health Awareness Dates

### This Month: October 2023 Month

- [ADHD Awareness Month](#)
- [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#)
- [Down Syndrome Awareness Month](#)
- [Dyslexia Awareness Month](#)
- [National Bullying Prevention Awareness Month](#)
- [National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month](#)
- [Positive Attitude Month](#)

### Week

- 1-7 [Mental Illness Awareness Week](#)
- 23-27 [Body Acceptance Week](#)
- 23-31 [Red Ribbon Week](#)

### Day

- 2 [World Day of Bullying Prevention](#)
- 4 [Walk/Bike to School Day](#)
- 5 [World Teacher's Day](#)
- 10 [World Mental Health Day](#)
- 18 [Unity Day](#)
- 22 [International Stuttering Awareness Day](#)



*Note: This newsletter includes links to external resources.*

## October is National Bullying Prevention Awareness Month

Before we dive into this topic more, below are some quick reminders of what bullying is and Galileo's Policy on Bullying.

**Florida Department of Education's definition of Bullying** is "Systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. Bullying includes instances of cyberbullying, as defined in Section 1006.147(3)(b), F.S. Bullying may include, but is not limited to, repetitive instances of teasing, social exclusion, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, harassment, public or private humiliation, or destruction of property. If the physical harm or psychological distress is not the result of systematic or chronic behavior, evaluate for Harassment."

### **Galileo's Policy on Bullying**

Our number one rule centers on the Golden Rule and a no teasing/bullying policy. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment are not tolerated and are addressed in accordance with the SCPS Bullying and Harassment policy. The family of a student who believes they have been subjected to serious offenses such as bullying should immediately report the concerns to school administration.

## Bullying Warning Signs

There are a lot of factors to consider when determining if actions are considered bullying versus mutual teasing, unintentional hurtfulness, and so on. Examining the warning signs that a child is being bullied or bullying others can be one such consideration.

*Note: This list of warning signs is not a comprehensive list nor the only considerations as each situation is unique. These signs may not necessarily be related to bullying; they may be related to something else. Talking with your child is a great first step.*



## Let's work together

### **How Parents and Guardians Can Help Prevent Bullying & Support Safe Netiquette/Tech Etiquette**

- Gain a better understanding about **what bullying and cyberbullying are**, and the **facts about them**
- **Talk with children and teens about bullying and cyberbullying** (see these helpful tips for [How to Talk About Bullying](#)). You can also watch short [webisodes](#) and [have a discussion](#) about them.
- **Talk with your child/teen about Digital Citizenship** and/or **communicate expectations about Tech Use**. Consider creating a [Family Tech Planner](#), having your child understand and sign a [Technology Use Contract](#), and/or understand and agree to an [Internet Use Contract](#) so the expectations for tech use are clearly communicated
- **Monitor your child's tech use**. Observe what they're using on their device(s) and [stay up-to-date](#) on the latest apps, programs, social sites, and games that kids are using
- **Recognize the Warning Signs of Bullying and Cyberbullying**
- If your **child discloses that they're being bullied**, avoid blaming them for being bullied. Ask them what they need (hint: they usually need more support and less advice). Gather information and report it to the school. If your child is feeling isolated, help them make connections through clubs, hobbies, or extracurricular activities. Encourage children and teens to talk to a trusted adult about any bullying they've experienced personally or witnessed and [support the kids involved](#)
- **Talk with them about ways to prevent bullying and ways to stand up to bullies** such as [being an upstander for those who are being bullied](#) or [be an upstander for those who are being cyberbullied](#)
- **Keep up-to-date in your child/teen's life. Each day, have brief conversations with them** so they know they can talk to you about anything. **Ask things that help you gain a better understanding of their experiences**, such as:
  - What was a high and a low in your day?
  - How was lunch today? Who did you sit with and how did things go?
  - How are things going in your classroom? What's going well? Are you having any troubles?
  - Are you running into any difficult situations at school or online?
  - Who are your friends this year? Are there any changes in your friend group? If yes, why and what happened?
  - How are you feeling about yourself? What are you good at and what do you like best about yourself?
  - What's your favorite app/game? What do you do on it? Do you ever chat with anyone you don't personally know on there? How do you treat others?



There are a lot of ways to prevent or handle bullying and cyberbullying situations. Responding to bullying or cyberbullying attempts can be effective and parents/guardians can support their youth by recommending some strategies that have been shown to be effective for youth when dealing with bullying. Strategies for dealing with cyberbullying follow on the next page.

## Dealing with Bullying: Specific Strategies Youth Can Use

### **Bullying Prevention (before an incident)**

- Avoid unsafe places or places where there is little adult supervision
- Walk with supportive friends or a small group of friendly peers
- Alert an adult to any unsettling behaviors from others

### **Bullying Intervention (during an incident)**

- Tell the bully to “stop” directly. Use assertive (not aggressive, fighting, or teasing back) communication when possible.
- Ask for help from an adult, a friend, a supportive peer, or a classmate when a potentially threatening situation occurs
- Walk away from a potential bullying situation or avoid unsafe places
- Make a joke or use humor to deflect a potentially threatening situation.
- Agree with or “own” a belittling comment and shrug it off to disarm it.
- Avoid getting upset or showing that you’re upset when bullying occurs, as this may fuel the person who is bullying

### **Bullying Postvention (after an incident)**

- Report the bullying incident
- Use healthy internal self-talk to maintain positive self-esteem during and after a bullying incident
- Talk with a trusted adult about your experience
- Engage in healthy self-care, social interactions, and hobbies/experiences
- Seek help from a professional



### **Resources and Further Reading**

- [CyberBullying.org](https://www.cyberbullying.org)
- [Florida Department of Education Bullying Prevention](https://www.florida.gov/education/bullying-prevention)
- [SCPS Bullying Prevention](https://www.scps.edu/bullying-prevention)
- [StopBullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov)



## Dealing with Cyberbullying: Specific Strategies Youth Can Use

### **Cyberbullying Prevention (before an incident)**

- Use strong passwords and change passwords regularly; delete any profiles of yours that have been hacked
- Avoid sites, networks, and apps that have poor security, share personal information, or encourage interactions (private or public) among strangers
- Only accept friend or network requests from people you know; never accept requests from people or accounts you don't know
- Watch what you post by using the "mom principle" or the "ex principle:" If you wouldn't want your mom to see it (or dad, another important caregiver) or your ex, don't post it.
- Before posting, assume that anyone could see it at any time; almost nothing online is truly private or truly ever gets deleted/goes away.
- Set up privacy permissions for tagging so that you have to approve any posts you're tagged in before they post to your profile
- Don't participate in public or online shaming
- Never engage in sharing or re-sharing pictures, videos, messages that have private, sexual content

### **Cyberbullying Intervention (during an incident)**

- As soon as you experience questionable or threatening behaviors from others online, block the profile(s) and/or messaging account(s)
- Don't reply or retaliate against cyberbullying and don't forward the messages
- Don't post anything about the cyberbully that could provoke or worsen any interactions (or start additional interactions from other cyberbullies)

### **Cyberbullying Postvention (after an incident)**

- Report the cyberbully through the program's reporting feature
- Use healthy internal self-talk to maintain positive self-esteem during and after a cyberbullying incident
- Talk with a trusted adult about your experience
- Engage in healthy self-care, social interactions, and hobbies/experiences
- Seek help from a professional



### **Tell Us What You Think!**

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